

Currency Exchange and the Gang of Fifteen

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Overview: One of the many challenges of traveling in foreign countries is trying to determine how much things actually cost in U.S. dollars, even though we are using local currency. This activity provides students with that opportunity as they “travel” around the world on the trail of the Gang of Fifteen.

Grade Level: This particular lesson plan was designed for grades 4-10, comfortably, but may be adapted to other grades.

Geography Standards:

1. How to use maps and other geographic representations, tools, and technologies to acquire, process and report information from a spatial perspective.
2. How to use mental maps to organize information about people, places, and environments in a spatial context.
11. The patterns and networks of economic interdependence on Earth's surface.
18. How to apply Geography to interpret the present and plan for the future.

Materials Required:

- * Gang of Fifteen clues and information (provided in this lesson)
- * International Exchange Rates (provided from September of 1995)
- * Reference materials, such as atlases, almanacs, encyclopedias, globes or computer data programs (World Atlas, World Factbook, Culturegrams or MacGlobe/PC Globe)
- * Calculators for determining exchange rates
- * World map handouts for students to plot the Gang's route
- * Foreign currency that you might locate for display

Objectives: Upon completion of this lesson plan, students will be able to

1. demonstrate the ability to research information utilizing a variety of resources,
2. demonstrate the ability to comprehend and calculate currency exchange rates,
3. plot a specific route on a world map,
4. deduct a specific global location from a clue,
5. determine the final global location following a series of clues, and
6. logically approach a potentially confusing issue such as currency exchange rates.

Suggested Procedure: Distribute the "Gang of Fifteen" information clues. Work with the students as a class on the first and second clues to demonstrate the procedure for working with the clues and for determining clue results. Given the clues, the students will first need to identify a country; they should write down the name of the country associated with each clue, along with the currency of the country. Next, they will have to use the exchange rate to calculate how much the Gang spent in each country; they will write down the money spent in each country on their answer sheet/piece of paper. Then, the students will proceed on their own or in small groups.

Evaluation: On a separate sheet of paper/answer sheet, the students should write down the name of each country associated with the clue number, together with the country's currency and the dollar amount spent in that country. Each student will be evaluated on their answers and on their group interaction.

Foreign Currency Exchange Rates as of Sept. 15, 1995. What one U.S. dollar equals:

Country	Currency	Exchange Rate	Country	Currency	Exchange Rate
Australia	Dollar	0.7594	Japan	Yen	103.5200
Austria	Schilling	10.4643	Malaysia	Dollar	2.5235
Belgium	Franc	30.6200	Netherlands	Guilder	1.6669
Canada	Dollar	1.3660	Norway	Krone	6.4915
China, P.R.	Yuan	8.3394	Portugal	Escudo	154.5200
Denmark	Krone	5.7570	Singapore	Dollar	1.4430
Finland	Markka	4.4395	South Africa	Rand	3.6740
France	Franc	5.1180	South Korea	Won	776.3000
Germany	Mark	1.4875	Spain	Peseta	126.9700
Hong Kong	Dollar	7.7370	Sweden	Kranta	7.1535
India	Rupee	33.9000	Thailand	Baht	25.2000
Italy	Lira	1610.0000	U.K.	Pound	0.645

To calculate foreign currency amounts into U.S. dollars, take the amount of foreign currency spent and divide by the exchange rate.

The Gang of Fifteen

You are part of an International Investigative Team. An international criminal organization known as the Gang of Fifteen is known to have become active again and is planning the eradication of crosswalks world-wide. Such a terrorist act cannot be allowed to happen, as widespread and indiscriminate jaywalking could spread overnight and could lead to other more serious pedestrian crimes!!! We have discovered this plot, and we can trace this criminal organization through credit card bills that have been monitored. Your job, as top students, is to track the Gang through its credit card trail. You will be given information about the countries that the organization has visited and the amount that they charged on a stolen credit card. When you know the country, find out what the monetary unit is, check the exchange rate, and calculate how many U.S. dollars that they spent. The credit card company is giving us the information in exchange for our help in tracking down the criminal element. All that the credit card company requests from us is to determine the total U.S. dollars spent by the Gang. Below are the clues to help you find the group. For each of the following clues, give the name of the country, the foreign currency, and the U.S. dollar equivalent (or the foreign currency equivalent if given the U.S. dollar amount). Use the exchange rates for September, 1995, because that is the month that the Gang was most active. Upon completing all of the clues, determine the location of the criminal elements and the total U.S. dollars spent.

- 1.** The Gang was first spotted in one of this country's provinces during Victoria Day at a lacrosse match. They spent 450 on refreshments and, then, stole a boat.
- 2.** The Gang turned up here, where they were spotted eating Fish and Chips at a cafe in Dover. They apparently stayed in a flat which they rented for the time that they were in this country. For the flat, they spent 1100.
- 3.** The Gang then travelled through the Chunnel and took a TGV to Strasbourg, the tickets costing a total of 1500.
- 4.** The Gang next turned up in Flanders at a speech given by King Baudouin I. They apparently gorged themselves on waffles, for they charged a cafe bill of 2100.
- 5.** Next, the Gang went north to Narvik and bought a up a large supply of lutefisk and smalahode to take with them as they skied cross-country. The total food and travel bill was U.S. \$152.98. How much in the local currency does this equate?
- 6.** They crossed the border on their skis and were soon spotted in Karlstadt buying lots of warm clothing, for which they charged 6000.
- 7.** Then, the Gang was spotted cruising on the autobahn in this country, decked out in new lederhosen, which they bought in Bavaria at a cost of U.S. \$200. How much in local currency did they spend?
- 8.** The Gang was next seen in Catalonia on their way to Malaga, where they consumed massive quantities of gazpacho and attended several festivals. Altogether during their stay here, they charged 150,000.
- 9.** The Gang appeared in the Po River valley in this country and went down to Calabria, where they crossed over to Palermo. En route, the Gang bought biscotti and large amounts of parmesan and mozzarella cheese at a total cost of 45,000.
- 10.** The Gang could not be found for some time until they appeared in Madras, wearing sarees that they had purchased at a cost of U.S. \$175.17. How much in local currency did they spend?
- 11.** After Madras, the Gang travelled east and escaped police in samlors following a low speed chase in the city of Chiang Mai. The Gang was very grateful to their salmor driver and after paying the fare, gave him a large tip for a total of 600.
- 12.** The Gang stayed out of sight until they were spotted playing mah-jong in Victoria. Gang members gambled and lost big at mah-jong, which cost them 3,300.
- 13.** The Gang continued on to Pusan, where they spent 250,000 on Taekwondo lessons. They then left for

14. the island of Honshu, where they rode the bullet train the length of the island. Of course, they charged the train tickets at a total cost of U.S. \$212.89. How much in local currency?

15. The criminals were last seen here, bushwalking in the outback, with a large supply of camping equipment they had bought in Darwin for 60,000.

Now, if you have figured out each country and monetary equivalents, you will have the honor of locating the Gang and allowing for their capture. Plot the Gangs route on a world map and give an accounting of how many U.S. dollars and of foreign currency that they spent.

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